

# Middle East

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## In Israel, officials use U.S. spying revelation to bring new focus to Pollard case



Gali Tibbon/Pool via AP - Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu gestures as he opens a weekly cabinet meeting at his office in Jerusalem.

By Ruth Eglash, [E-mail the writer](#)

JERUSALEM — Revelations that U.S. and British spy agencies intercepted e-mails and tapped the phone lines of an Israeli prime minister and other top officials caused a stir here Sunday, with some legislators using the disclosures to draw attention to the case of a Jewish American who has been held in a U.S. prison for more than 26 years, convicted of spying on the United States for Israel.

Over the weekend, documents provided to journalists by former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden listed more than 1,000 individuals and offices targeted by the NSA and Britain's Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ). Information dating back to 2009 identified several Israeli officials, including [then-Prime Minister Ehud Olmert](#) and [then-Defense Minister Ehud Barak](#), as well as two Israeli embassies, as being among the targets.

**[\[Related: The spy who's been left in the cold\]](#)**

The revelations of U.S. spying on Israel come at a time of heightened tension between the two countries because of sharp disagreements about tactics regarding the civil war in Syria and an interim deal to dismantle Iran's nuclear program.

At his weekly cabinet meeting Sunday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu loosely referred to the spying allegations by raising once again the case of Jonathan Pollard, a former

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[#Egypt](#)'s govt has yet to provide any evidence that the Muslim Brotherhood has carried out any terrorist attacks since the July coup.

[@ahauslohner](#) about an hour ago

In a statement, the Free Egyptians Party has (also) blamed the Brotherhood fr tday's bombing, & lumped it in w recent university protests.

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### The Post's Foreign Bureaus



(KARL DEBLAKER/AP) - Jonathan Pollard speaks during an interview on May 15, 1998, in a conference room at the Federal Correction Institution in Butner, N.C. Pollard, a former U.S. naval intelligence clerk, is serving a life sentence for passing military secrets to Israel.

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American intelligence analyst who was found guilty in 1987 of passing classified U.S. information to Israel.

Successive Israeli prime ministers have asked U.S. leaders to release Pollard, who was granted Israeli citizenship in 1995. All have refused. Netanyahu has taken a personal interest in the case, visiting Pollard in prison in 2002 before he became prime minister for the second time.

“We do not need any special event in order to discuss the release of Jonathan Pollard,” Netanyahu told his ministers. “We hope that the conditions will be created that will enable us to bring Jonathan home. This is neither conditional on, nor related to, recent events, even though we have given our opinion on these developments.”

Other Israeli leaders have been more direct in criticizing U.S. spying and comparing it to Pollard’s case.

“This is a severe case, and I hope this is the iceberg rather than the tip of the iceberg,” said Yuli Edelstein, speaker of the Knesset, [the Jerusalem Post reported](#). “Otherwise, this case is liable to do damage to our relations with the U.S.”

Ayelet Shaked, who chairs the Knesset caucus that lobbies for Pollard’s release, said, “It is completely unfathomable that the United States, a most trusted ally and friend of Israel, would hold to such a blatant double standard by continuing to keep Jonathan Pollard in prison while at the same time conducting systematic espionage against Israeli officials.”

From the archives:

[Jonathan Pollard: The spy who’s been left in the cold](#)

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Ilikeke wrote:

12/23/2013 6:16 AM GMT+0200

Actually, the NSA should open up the files on Aipac, as an agent of a foreign country interfering in US internal and external affairs; and USAG should follow up and reopen the Aipac case. Pollard is only the tip of the Iceberg



**spades72** responds:  
12/23/2013 6:21 AM GMT+0200

"Pollard is only the tip of the Iceberg"

There is absolutely no doubt about your statement. Too bad the American people are so gullible.



**Voice\_of\_reason\_** responds:  
5:06 PM GMT+0200

"There is absolutely no doubt in your statement" to someone who is so anti-Semitic that any information would be a meaningless distraction.

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